

The consolidation of media ownership does not bode well for democracy. The media owners are using the media to defeat major bills and set government policy. I was at a meeting of the AMA on June 21, 1993 at the Sheraton Washington Hotel, in which the speaker was introduced as the journalist covering Clintons health care initiative. He proceeded to acknowledge that their goal was to defeat Clinton's health care bill. He warned them that if they get into an us verses them situation they were in trouble. He said your best bet for defeating this bill was to ally yourself with the consumer. What does it mean to ally yourself with the consumer.

Before the meeting the articles in the Washington Post were right on, talking about the enormous amount of money doctors make. One I remember talked about a radiologist that made \$100 every time he read an X-Ray and it took him 5 minutes. Another talked about how doctors use their skills as a commodity to the highest bidder.

After that meeting the strategy took place. Gone from the health care debate was any talk of doctor's pay. Instead we heard simple phrases over and over like "How is Clinton doing with his health care bill" and "will you be happy with Clinton's health care bill" and "the whole thing is so complicated that we can't explain it". They also floated the idea of a big bureaucracy with all the sensitivity of the IRS. We were never given enough information so that we could decide for ourselves. Clinton himself had lost control of his message.

I have shared with you an instance that I personally witnessed in which the media used a strategy to defeat a major bill.

Information is so central to democracy that without the free flow of information there is no democracy. To control information is to control politics. The media can control a candidate's image in such a way as to lead to defeat or victory it can also control the president's image. The media already controls politics, sets policy. The president and congress are just figure heads.

Please vote no for Broadcast Ownership, Docket-02-277. I would also like to testify about the meeting I witnessed. If there are any future hearings on ownership of media.

Sincerely,
Alice E. Dodds